



Read It Again!:

*An Approach to Comprehension, Fluency,
Vocabulary, and Word Analysis Instruction*

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READ IT AGAIN! : AN APPROACH TO COMPREHENSION, FLUENCY, VOCABULARY, AND WORD ANALYSIS INSTRUCTION

Introduction

Rationale: Almost a half-century ago, Jay Samuels (1979) demonstrated the power of re-reading. Children who have the opportunity to reread stories and informational books gain deeper understanding, develop fluency, gain better insight into vocabulary words and concepts, and become more efficient decoders (Dowhower, 1987; Rasinski, Reutzel, Chard, & Linan-Thompson, 2011), which is equally true for second language learners (August & Shanahan, 2006). When children have the opportunity to reread, they confirm what they already know and use that knowledge to fuel deeper exploration. With each rereading, students' familiarity with the content also enables them to focus on fluency and phrasing and supports the acquisition of new vocabulary words and concepts. Explanation of SmartyAnt's Repeated Reading (4) of the James Howe series, Houndsley and Colina.

1) Picture Walk: In this first "read," students will hear three SmartyAnts make observations and ask questions about the pictures, one chapter at a time. This promotes comprehension and also provides motivation to hear and read the story (e.g., Denburg, 1976-77; Greene, 2004).

2) Model Reading: In this second "read," students will hear the chapter read to them by an expert

reader, a scaffolding technique used with younger children to promote comprehension upon reading the story themselves (Kuhn & Schwanenflugel, 2006). Before students hear this reading, they will do a word work lesson that will begin to familiarize them with the chapter's vocabulary—both in terms of meaning and pronunciation. As the professional storyteller reads, students will follow along, but will also have the option of hearing specific words spoken and/or defined again, an important option for second language learners. On occasion, the professional reader will explain a literary technique (e.g., the use of figurative language), a standard writing convention (e.g., how dialogue is written in English texts), the use of a picture to construct meaning, rereading, even blending phonemes and finding familiar word chunks to decode words (Short, Kane, & Peeling, 2000). At the end of this model reading, there will be a short comprehension lesson (e.g., a comparison of character traits) followed by a few comprehension questions. Explanations of the correct answer will accompany any incorrect response and the child will be given another chance to answer.

3) Reader's Theater Reading: In this third opportunity with the story, the student will participate in a Reader's Theater version, where he or she will assume a part. The program will read the parts not assumed by the student. Reader's

Theater is one of the most well-known approaches to repeated reading (Young & Rasinski, 2009) and serves as a highly motivational strategy to promote rereading.

4) Greek Chorus Reading: In ancient times, the role of the Greek chorus was to scaffold the audience's knowledge and interpretation of a play. At times the chorus would provide background information, sometimes explain a difficult part, and at other times predict what might come next. Hearing a Greek chorus in the context of contemporary fiction, students will be introduced to a classical technique, while at the same time gain insight into listeners and readers who are

actively engaged with text. That is, the student will be involved in what we call today a type of "think aloud," a proven teaching technique (Wilhelm, 2001), albeit with an engaging twist! When students hear experts think aloud, as is the case when hearing a Greek chorus, they learn that active readers predict, compare, describe, make connections, question, clarify, identify what is important, and speculate, among other activities. The actual text of the Howe book will be read and heard by the students, perhaps a repeat recording of their own voices captured during their Reader's Theater experience. An activity, after participating in the Greek chorus, will extend the experience.

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